

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 703

By Evans

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Dr. Farris Moore on the celebration of his 100th birthday.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pay tribute to those citizens who are celebrating special occasions in their estimable lives; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Farris Moore is celebrating his one hundredth birthday on July 21, 2009, a milestone that is being commemorated as yet another precious souvenir of life's rich pageant; and

WHEREAS, a humble Christian servant who has preached literally thousands of sermons, Dr. Moore has attributed his origin to dozens of exotic locales throughout the years, from Alaska to Perth, Australia, often stating, "I'm Farris Moore and I come from Nome, Alaska."; and

WHEREAS, this beloved gentleman was actually born in Coopertown in Robertson County, Tennessee on July 21, 1909, and was delivered at home by his great-grandmother, who was a midwife; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Moore graduated from Coopertown School in 1928, and is currently the second oldest living alumnus of that institution. He continued his education at Tennessee Tech, graduating in 1941 with a B.S. in History; and

WHEREAS, he received a Bachelor's Degree in Divinity from Vanderbilt University in 1946, paying his way with "one old jersey cow and a hundred hens." In 1951 he was honored as one of four "Outstanding Graduates" of Tennessee Tech, receiving the dedication in the school's yearbook; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Moore has spent his entire adult life in service to God's church and delivered his first sermon in October, 1935 in Claysville, Tennessee. He was licensed to preach

through Martin's Chapel Methodist Church and received his first appointment to a group of five churches in Cumberland County; and

WHEREAS, he and his beloved wife, Virginia, to whom he was married for over 71 years, started their ministry together on an annual salary of \$435.00, \$120.00 of which was committed to paying the rent for the parsonage; and

WHEREAS, his first appointment began a life of service to the Methodist Church which would take him from congregations as small as eight folks to more than 3,250 strong as pastor of Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Moore retired in 1980 from the full-time ministry after serving as Development Director for McKendree Arbor, and it was during this last appointment that he and Virginia bought a home in Springfield for their retirement; and

WHEREAS, in a strange twist of fate, Dr. Moore never pastored a church in his home county, but it is in Robertson County where he has become widely known and loved; and

WHEREAS, by his count, Dr. Moore has preached over 3,500 funerals, sometimes as many as five in one day, and has officiated at countless weddings, baptisms, and guest preaching engagements, as well as his long association as retired assistant to the pastor at Springfield's First United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, as Dr. Moore looks back on his remarkable career in the ministry, he notes among his proudest accomplishments four events: first, a Doctorate of Divinity conferred by Tennessee Wesleyan University in 1960 for his research on representation in the Methodist Church's general and jurisdictional conferences which was presented at the General Conference in Denver and subsequently adopted at the next convening four years later; second, his work as Locations Chair for the Tennessee Annual Conference, which service resulted in Martin Methodist College remaining in Pulaski, Tennessee; third, his eleven years as President of the Old Jerusalem Credit Union which served all of the members of the Tennessee Conference; and finally, his tenure as Chairman of the Board of Pension, during which he championed the movement to secure just and equal pensions for African American ministers in the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, for 35 years, Dr. Moore took it upon himself to write and send a letter to every pastor in the conference when he or she received a new appointment, offering a word of encouragement, which kindness meant a great deal to these pastors as they came into a new church family; and

WHEREAS, in honor of his 100th birthday, Dr. Moore served as the guest preacher at First United Methodist Church in Springfield on Sunday, July 19, 2009. Then on July 21, a birthday celebration is being held in his honor in the Fellowship Hall at the church; and

WHEREAS, as he begins his second century of life here on earth, a life that has been filled with both joy and more than his share of suffering, Dr. Moore wisely asserts that given the opportunity to begin again, he would take his life just the way it has been; and

WHEREAS, for the fortunate people who have had the privilege of knowing Dr. Farris Moore and being ministered to by him, July 21, 2009, marks a day of great thanksgiving for a life well-lived and prayer for many more years of Dr. Moore sharing his wealth of knowledge and deep faith in their community; and

WHEREAS, we wish to grasp this golden opportunity to specially recognize one of Tennessee's most outstanding citizens on this very special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Dr. Farris Moore on the celebration of his 100th birthday, commend his bountiful life spent in faithful service to God and His children, and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.